

MACAULAY'S THIRD CHAPTER

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history can be little instructive, and often will not be intelligible.¹

After his narrative of the reign of Charles II and James II, Hume added : ^f We shall subjoin to this general view of the English government, some account of the state of the finances, arms, trade, manners, arts, between the Restoration and Revolution/*² and covered in a dozen pages much the same ground as Macaulay does in his third chapter.

What Dr. Johnson had desired and Hume attempted, many others since Macaulay have tried to do, and a comparison of the different ways in which they approached the problem will bring out the characteristics of Macaulay's method. Arrangement is the great difficulty : how is it best to combine the economic and social facts with the political and military facts? Spencer Walpole begins his History of England from 1815 with a description of the social and economic condition of England, which occupies about 400 pages, and is supplemented later by episodes dealing with separate subjects. W. E* H. Lecky prefixes to his History of England in the Eighteenth Century an analysis of the relative strength of the religious and political parties whose action determined the development of the state, and inserts from time to time long chapters describing social, religious, and intellectual changes.

He had not attempted, he declared, to write a history of the period year by year. ' It has been my object to disengage from the great mass of facts those which relate to the permanent forces of the nation, or which indicate some of the more enduring features of national life/ As he proceeded, however, he changed his scale and his scheme, combining

¹ David Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar* (1871), iii. 90.

² *Ibid.* p. 775.